

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6406

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

CINCPAC CAMP SMITH HI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 6913

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IR

SUBJECT: PAK-IRANIAN RELATIONS

SUMMARY: PM BHUTTO'S VISIT TO IRAN THIS WEEK BRINGS HIM TOGETHER WITH THE SHAH FOR THE FIFTH TIME IN LESS THAN TWO YEARS AND HAS PROMPTED YET ANOTHER OUTPOURING OF RHETORIC HERE EXTOLLING THE CLOSENESS OF PAK-IRANIAN RELATIONS. THIS RHETORIC SUGGESTS A RELATIONSHIP OF FRATERNAL EQUALITY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH MANY PAKISTANIS NOW SEEM TO RECOGNIZE DOES NOT REFLECT THE FACTS OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE. THE GROWING DISPARITY BETWEEN IRAN AND PAKISTAN IN ALMOST EVERY SPHERE HAS SPARKED EVIDENT RESENTMENT HERE. THE GOP HAS BEEN CAREFUL NOT ALLOW THIS SENTIMENT TO INTERFERE
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WITH ITS VALUABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GOI.

EVER SINCE 1974, WHEN THE SHAH BEGAN HIS EFFORT TO IMPROVE INDO-IRANIAN RELATIONS, THE GOP HAS BEEN WORRIED BY THE PROSPECT THAT WHAT IT SOMETIMES CALLS ITS "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" WITH IRAN WILL BE SERIOUSLY ERODED. PAK APPREHENSIONS ABOUT INDO-IRANIAN RELATIONS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN HEIGHTENED AND PERHAPS SYMBOLIZED BY THE ISSUE OF INDIA'S POSSIBLE MEMBERSHIP IN THE RCD. PAKS RIGHTLY FIND COMFORT IN THE NOTION THAT IRAN'S FEAR OF A POWERFUL INDIA ON ITS OWN BORDERS RULES OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT TEHRAN WILL EVER PERMIT ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH DELHI TO DEVELOP TO THE POINT WHERE PAKISTAN'S SECURITY IS THREATENED. PERHAPS MORE PERTINENT IS THE QUESTION AS TO WHAT EXTENT THE SHAH MAY CEASE TO GIVE PAKISTAN THE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION HE HAS IN THE PAST, WHILE MAINTAINING HIS BASIC COMMITMENT TO ITS SECURITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS INTEREST IN FURTHERING THE STABILITY OF AREAS ADJACENT TO IRAN. WHATEVER THE PERSONAL FEELING OF PAKISTANIS TOWARDS THE IRANIANS, THE GOP CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO DO WHAT IT CAN TO MAINTAIN AND IF POSSIBLE BOLSTER THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP IT ENJOYS WITH THE GOI. IN DOING SO, THE GOP WILL RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS THE IRANIANS WHO ARE CALLING THE TUNE. THE PAKS HAVE LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO DANCE TO IT. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO'S UNOFFICIAL THREE DAY VISIT TO TEHRAN BRINGS HIM TOGETHER WITH THE SHAH FOR THE FIFTH TIME IN LESS THAN TWO YEARS. DURING THAT PERIOD, WHICH BEGAN WITH BHUTTO'S OCTOBER 1974 STOPOVER IN TEHRAN EN ROUTE BACK FROM MOSCOW, THE SHAH HAS BEEN TO PAKISTAN TWICE (IN FEBRUARY 1975 AND MARCH 1976) AND HAS MET THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE RCD SUMMIT IN IZMIR (APRIL 1976), FLYING BACK AS FAR AS IRAN WITH HIM AFTERWARDS. THE GOP PUBLICLY MAKES MUCH OF THE FREQUENCY OF THESE ENCOUNTERS. AN EDITORIAL IN THE GOP-OWNED PAKISTAN TIMES OF JULY 6, THE DAY BHUTTO WENT TO TEHRAN, SAID TYPICALLY THAT "THESE FREQUENT, INFORMAL MEETINGS REFLECT NOT ONLY THE DEEP PERSONAL RAPPORT WHICH THE TWO LEADERS HAVE BUILT OVER THE YEARS BUT ALSO THE CLOSE, CORDIAL AND ENDURING TIES WHICH LINK THEIR NATIONS TOGETHER. THE MOST RECENT

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MEETING, IT ADDED IN APPROPRIATELY IMPERIAL PURPLE PROSE, "WILL BE A MEETING OF FRIENDS, OF BROTHERS, OF TWO FAR-SIGHTED LEADERS STRIVING TOGETHER TO SECURE A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR THE PEOPLE OF THEIR TWO COUNTRIES WHOSE DESTINIES, HISTORY, AND GEOGRAPHY HAVE WOVEN TOGETHER." THE REST OF THE PRESS HAS FAITHFULLY ECHOED SIMILAR THEMES.

2. SUCH WELL PUBLICIZED DEFINITIONS HERE OF PAK-IRANIAN TIES SUGGEST A RELATIONSHIP OF FRATERNAL EQUALITY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH MANY PAKISTANIS NOW SEEM TO RECOGNIZE DOES NOT REFLECT THE FACTS OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE. THE GROWING DISPARITY BETWEEN IRAN AND PAKISTAN IN ALMOST EVERY SPHERE HAS SPARKED EVIDENT RESENTMENT AMONG PAKISTANIS. WITH RARE EXCEPTIONS THIS DOES NOT SURFACE IN THE PRESS, BUT IT CROPS UP NOT INFREQUENTLY IN CONVERSATION, EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE THE MOST REASON TO ADOPT WARM ATTITUDES TOWARD THE IRANIANS. WE GET THE IMPRESSION THAT MANY PAKISTANIS SHARE A PERCEPTION OF THE IRANIANS AS SOFT, IF CULTURED PEOPLE, LACKING THE MARTIAL SPIRIT AND MODERN MILITARY EXPERIENCE SO PRIZED IN PAKISTAN. PAKISTANIS ARE APT TO REMARK ON THE IRONY THAT THE OIL WEALTH WHICH HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR THESE UNWARLIKE NEIGHBORS TO ARM THEMSELVES SO LAVISHLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN FOUND IN IRAN (AND NOT HERE). RESENTMENT OF IRANIAN GOOD FORTUNE IS NOT DIMINISHED BY IRANIAN ARROGANCE, ULTIMATELY PERSONIFIED IN THE SHAH HIMSELF. HE IS NOT A WELL-LOVED FIGURE IN PAKISTAN.

3. ALTHOUGH THESE SENTIMENTS ARE APPARENTLY HELD BY MANY IN HIGH GOVERNMENT POSITIONS--BHUTTO HIMSELF HAS DROPPED AN OCCASIONAL REMARK ABOUT THE IMPERIAL CHARACTER OF THE SHAH--THE GOP HAS BEEN CAREFUL NOT TO ALLOW THEM TO INTERFERE WITH ITS CLOSE AND VALUABLE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GOI. IT IS ONLY TOO AWARE OF ITS DEPENDENCE ON IRAN FOR ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND (CONTINGENT) MILITARY SUPPORT. THIS HAS BEEN AND CONTINUES TO BE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR PAKISTAN. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS HAS AMOUNTED TO \$580 MILLION IN CASH LOANS PLUS COMMITMENTS FOR PROJECT AID ESTIMATED AT \$50-200 MILLION.

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IRAN HAS FOR THESE TWO YEARS SURPASSED THE UNITES STATES AS PAKISTAN'S LARGEST AID DONOR. THE GOP LOOKS TO THE SHAH FOR CONTINUING SUPPORT--MOSTLY FINANCIAL--FOR PAKISTANI EFFORTS TO MODERNIZE ITS ARMED FORCES. REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND THE THREE SERVICES MAKE REGULAR PILGRIMAGES TO TEHRAN TO SEEK ADDITIONAL AID AND OFTEN RETURN TO ISLAMABAD WITH NEW PLEDGES. DURING THE PAST FISCAL YEAR, IRAN PROVIDED THE GOP A \$150 MILLION LOAN EARMARKED ESPECIALLY FOR MILITARY PURCHASES. THE REPORTED \$300 MILLION LOAN FROM AMERICAN BANKS TO THE GOP GUARANTEED BY IRAN WILL ALSO BE USED IN PART FOR MILITARY PURCHAES.

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CINCPAC CAMP SMITH HI

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 6913

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IR

SUBJECT: PAK-IRANIAN RELATIONS

4. THESE FIGURES, AND THE LESS TANGIBLE FORMS OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT THE GOI HAS GIVEN
PAKISTAN ARE GREATLY PRIZED AND HELP TO EXPLAIN THE
CAREFUL ATTENTION THE GOP GIVES TO THE SHAH'S VIEWS AND
THE APPREHENSION IT SEEMS TO HAVE ABOUT POSSIBLY OFFENDING
HIM. THE IMPACT HIS ADVISE ON PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS
APPARENTLY HAD ON THE GOP IS ONLY THE LATEST AND MOST
IMPRESSIVE EVIDENCE OF HIS ABILITY TO BRING HIS INFLUENCE
SUCCESSFULLY TO BEAR HERE WHEN HE IS PERSUADED IT IS IN
HIS INTEREST TO DO SO. GOP AWARENESS OF THE SHAH'S
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SENSITIVITIES ADDS, OF COURSE, TO THIS ABILITY. (AT THE SAME TIME, THE SHAH HAS TREATED BHUTTO WITH RESPECT AND HAS BEEN MINDFUL OF THE PM'S POLITICAL PROBLEMS.)

5. EVER SINCE 1974, WHEN THE SHAH BEGAN HIS EFFORT TO IMPROVE INDO-IRANIAN RELATIONS, THE GOP HAS BEEN WORRIED BY THE PROSPECT THAT WHAT IT SOMETIMES CALLS ITS "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" WITH IRAN WILL BE SERIOUSLY ERODED. THE SOURCE OF HZIS FEAR IS IN MANY RESPECTS SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH THE PAKS EXPERIENCED IN THE EARLY SIXTIES VIS-A-VIS THEIR "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" WITH THE US AND WHICH THEY ARE BEGINNING TO FEEL NOW TOWARD THEIR "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" WITH THE PRC. BASICALLY, IT IS A CONCERN THAT ALL OF THESE COUNTRIES WILL SEE IT IN THEIR INTEREST TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE PREDOMINANT POWER ON THE SUBCONTINENT, RELAGATING PAKISTAN TO THE SECONDARY PLACE IN THEIR SCHEME OF THINGS WHICH ITS SIZE AND INTRINSIC STRENGTH AFFORD IT.

6. PAK APPREHENSIONS ABOUT INDO-IRANIAN RELATIONS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN HEIGHTENED AND PERHAPS SYMBOLIZED BY THE RCD EXPANSION ISSUE. ALTHOUGH THE IRANIANS HAVE GIVEN ASSURANCES THAT THE LARGELY MORBUND ORGANIZATION WOULD ONLY BE EXPANDED WITH THE CONSENT OF OTHER MEMBERS, AND THE PAKS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY COULD NOT ACCEPT NON-MUSLIM NATIONS (I.E., INDIA) IN THE GROUPING, THE ISSUE REMAINS A VERY SENSITIVE ONE. IT HAS BECOME EVEN MORE SO FOLLOWING PRESIDENT AHMED'S REPORTED EXPRESSION IN TEHRAN OF POSSIBLE INTEREST ON INDIA'S PART IN JOINING. THE IDEA OF A TRANSFORMATION OF RCD INTO A GROUPING DOMINATED BY IRAN AND INDIA AND SERVING PRINCIPALLY TO FACILITATE COMMERCE AND INVESTMENT BETWEEN THEM SEEMS TO HAVE A NIGHTMARE QUALITY FOR THE PAKS. THIS IS THE ONE SUBJECT ON WHICH THE GOVERNMENT PRESS HERE IS ALLOWED EVEN VEILED CRITICISM OF THE SHAH. IT IS INSTRUCTIVE THAT THE PAKISTAN TIMES EDITORIAL CITED IN PARAGRAPH ONE ABOVE DECLARED INDIAN EXCLUSION IN RCD A NON-ISSUE (BECAUSE THE PAKS COULD USE THEIR "VETO POWER" AGAINST IT) BUT THEN DEVOTED MORE THAN HALF ITS LENGTH TO ARGUING THAT IT WAS A DANGEROUS IDEA. THE INDEPENDENT NAWA-I-WAGT, A NATIONALIST, ISLAMIC-ORIENTED AILY, HAS BEEN MUCH MORE OUTSPOKEN: IT HAS DIRECTLY CRITICIZED THE SHAH FOR
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SUGGESTING THAT THE INDIANS MIGHT COME IN AND HAS URGED THAT WERE THAT TO HAPPEN PAKISTAN SHOULD QUIT.

7. SOME PAK OBSERVERS HAVE MAINTAINED THAT IRAN'S FEAR

OF A POWERFUL INDIA ON ITS OWN BORDERS RULES OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT IRAN WILL EVER PERMIT ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH DELHI TO DEVELOP TO THE POINT WHERE PAKISTAN'S SECURITY IS THREATENED. THEY ARGUE THAT IRAN'S STAKE IN PAKISTAN IS THUS DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE US, CHINA, OR THE ARAB WORLD IN THAT PAKISTAN'S INTEGRITY IS VITAL FOR IRAN'S OWN SECURITY. IN LIGHT OF THE SHAH'S OWN STATEMENTS ABOUT THE INTEGRITY OF PAKISTAN AND HIS PERCEPTIONS OF IRAN'S " POLITICAL REQUIREMENTS AS WE UNDERSTAND THEM, THIS ARGUMENT APPEARS VALID. PERHAPS MORE PERTINENT, HOWEVER, IS THE QUESTION AS TO WHAT EXTENT THE SHAH MAY CEASE TO GIVE PAKISTAN THE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION HE HAS IN THE PAST WHILE MAINTAINING HIS BASIC COMMITMENT TO ITS SECURITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IN THE CONTEXT OF HIS INTEREST IN FURTHERING THE STABILITY OF AREAS ADJACENT TO IRAN. WILL HE ASSUME THAT THE BETTER TIES HE IS NOW FORGING WITH INDIA AND THE NEW INFLUENCE HE IS GAINING IN DELHI WILL MAKE IT BOTH POSSIBLE AND ADVISABLE FOR IRAN TO LOWER THE QUANTUM OF SUPPORT IT PROVIDES TO KEEP PAKISTAN A SECURE AND GOING CONCERN. THE PAKS PROBABLY WORRY ABOUT THIS.

8. WHATEVER THE PERSONAL FEELING OF PAKISTANIS TOWARDS THE IRANIANS, THE GOP CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO DO WHAT IT CAN TO MAINTAIN AND IF POSSIBLE BOLSTER THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP IT ENJOYS WITH THE GOI. BHUTTO'S EFFORT TO INTEREST THE SHAH AND THE TURKS IN A NEW SECURITY ARRANGEMENT IS AN IMPORTANT MEASURE PROMPTED BY THIS. AND THE PM CAN BE EXPECTED TO PURSUE IT IF HE SEES ANY PROSPECT OF A CHANGE IN THE UNFAVORABLE FIRST REACTION OF THE TWO PROSPECTIVE PARTNER NATIONS. THE GOP WILL CONTINUE TO PAY CAREFUL HEED TO IRANIAN POSITIONS AND PREFERENCES. IN THIS CONNECTION IT CAN BE EXPECTED TO REMAIN AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF CENTO IF IT CONTINUES TO PERCEIVE, AS WE THINK IT NOW DOES, THAT PULLING OUT OF THE ORGANIZATION MIGHT IMPAIR ITS BILATERAL TIES WITH TEHRAN (AND IF THERE IS NO DRAMATIC DETERIORATION IN CONFIDENTIAL

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US-PAK RELATIONS). IT CAN ALSO BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE ITS PUBLIC ADULATION OF THE SHAH AND TO ENCOURAGE FURTHER FREQUENT MEETINGS BETWEEN THE LEADERS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES. IN DOING ALL THESE THINGS, THE GOP WILL RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS THE IRANIANS WHO ARE CALLING THE TUNE. THE PAKS HAVE LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO DANCE TO IT. TO DO OTHERWISE, TO RISK THE SHAH'S DISFAVOR AND SEEK COMPENSATORY SUPPORT ELSEWHERE WOULD INVOLVE A FUNDAMENTAL REORDERING OF PAK FOREIGN POLICY WHICH THE GOP HAS NO REASON TO BELIEVE WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL AND IS NOT NOW PREPARED TO UNDERTAKE. BYROADE

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